

Message Text

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64

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-06 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 AID-05 SAM-01 IO-11

ACDA-05 /097 W

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R 161411Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5877

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMCONSUL CASABLANCA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USINT BAGHDAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 247

KUWAIT FOR RLA MATTSON

KUWAIT ALSO PASS BAGHDAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ELAB, SY, EG

SUBJ: SYRIAN LABOR NETTLES EGYPT ON SINAI ACCORD

1. SUMMARY: SYRIAN SCLU PRES MAHMUD AL-HADID MAY BECOME
CANDIDATE FOR POSITION SYG INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION
OF ARAB TRADE UNIONS (ICATU). RECENT ATTENDANCE
OF CAIRO LABOR UNION CONFERENCE OFFERED PREVIEW OF
HIS OBJECTIVES: OPPOSITION TO SINAI AGREEMENT AND
PROMOTION OF NON-EGYPTIAN INFLUENCE WITHIN ICATU.
SYRIA USING LABOR AS LEVERAGE VIS-A-VIS EGYPT.

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END SUMMARY.

2. SYRIAN PRESS REPORTED THAT SYRIAN CONFEDERATION OF LABOR UNIONS (SCLU) PRES MAHMUD AL-HADID (WHO ALSO POWERFUL MEMBER OF BAATH PARTY REGIONAL COMMAND) DEPARTED DAMASCUS JAN 3 TO ATTEND CONFERENCE OF PRESIDENTS OF ARAB NATIONAL LABOR CENTERS HELD CAIRO JAN 5-6 AT REQUEST OF PALESTINIAN LABOR FEDERATION. HADID IN HIS DEPARTURE STATEMENT ASSERTED THAT CONFEREES WOULD DISCUSS "CURRENT POLITICAL CONDITIONS IN ARAB REGION FOLLOWING CONCLUSION OF EGYPTIAN-ISRAEL AGREEMENT AND IN PARTICULAR THE BLOODY EVENTS IN LEBANON." HE NOTED THAT THEY PLAN TO TAKE UP RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY CENTRAL COUNCIL OF INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION ARAB TRADE UNIONS (ICATU) IN DAMASCUS LAST SEPT 3-5 "WITH RESPECT TO ROLE OF ARAB LABOR IN RESISTING DEFEATIST AGREEMENT AND EXPOSING ITS SECRET AND PUBLIC CLAUSES WHICH ARE AIMED AT UNDERMINING ARAB SOLIDARITY AND AT REMOVING EGYPT FROM THE BATTLE." HADID ADDED THAT MEETING WOULD DISCUSS CONVENING "ARAB POPULAR CONFERENCE TO (DEBATE) ARAB ISSUES AND DECIDE UPON POSSIBILITY OF ACTION BY ARAB MASSES AND LABOR UNIONS TO CONFRONT CONSPIRACY AGAINST THE CAUSE." HADID STRESSED THAT ICATU "DOES NOT REPRESENT A SPECIFIC COUNTRY OR SYSTEM BUT RATHER REPRESENTS THE ARAB WORKING CLASS."

3. SYRIAN SOURCE WHO IS WELL INFORMED ON ARAB LABOR AFFAIRS TOLD EMBOFF AND RLA MATTSON JAN 14 THAT HADID HAD GONE TO CAIRO TO DISCUSS SINAI TREATY BUT HAD RETURNED "UNSUCCESSFUL." WHEN ASKED WHETHER HADID INTENDED TO PRESENT HIMSELF AS CANDIDATE FOR POSITION OF ICATU SYG IN UPCOMING ELECTIONS, HE REPLIED THAT HADID "LIKES CAIRO AND EGYPTIAN WAY OF LIFE." WHEN ASKED HIS OPINION ABOUT LIKELIHOOD OF HADID ACHIEVING HIS GOAL, HIS REPLY WAS "EGYPTIANS WANT TO REPLACE INCUMBENT WITH ANOTHER EGYPTIAN. IT WILL BE DIFFICULT FOR NON-EGYPTIAN TO WIN ELECTION. EGYPTIANS FEAR THAT LOSING THIS POSITION WOULD SET PRECEDENT WHICH WOULD AFFECT OTHER ORGANIZATIONS, SUCH AS ARAB LEAGUE, WHICH THEY PRESENTLY DOMINATE." CONFIDENTIAL

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4. COMMENT: OUR READING IS THAT HADID DOES INTEND TO RUN FOR POSITION OF ICATU SYG, AND PROBABLY USED TRIP TO CAIRO TO PROMOTE HIS CANDIDACY. JUDGING FROM HIS DEPARTURE COMMENTS AND SOURCE COMMENTS, HADID'S UNDERLYING PURPOSES INCLUDE OPPOSITION TO SINAI ACCORD AND DESIRE TO PROMOTE NON-EGYPTIAN INPUT INTO INTERNATIONAL ARAB ORGANIZATIONS SUCH

AS ICATU. HAVING PALESTINIAN LABOR
FEDERATION, WHICH IS HEADQUARTERED IN DAMASCUS,
CALL FOR HOLDING OF CONFERENCE PROBABLY INTENDED
TO ENHANCE INTER-ARAB ACCEPTABILITY OF SYRIAN
POSITION, AND IS GOOD EXAMPLE OF BENEFITS TO
SARG FROM SYRO-PALESTINIAN COORDINATION. WHILE
HADID'S CAMPAIGN NOT SURE OF SUCCESS, IT IS EVIDENT
THAT SYRIANS BELIEVE LABOR CONTACTS AND
ACTIVITIES CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR POLITICAL
LEVERAGE VIS-A-VIS EGYPT. FOLLOWING CAIRO CONFERENCE
ALGERIAN WORKERS DELEGATION VISITED DAMASCUS AND
ISSUED JOINT COMMUNIQUE CONDEMNING SINAI AGREEMENT.
CALL FOR "ARAB POPULAR CONFERENCE" MAY FORESHADOW
ATTEMPT ON SYRIAN PART TO ORGANIZE NEW ARAB LABOR
BODY IF THEY UNABLE TO BREACH EGYPT'S TRADITIONALLY
DOMINANT INFLUENCE WITHIN ICATU.
MURPHY

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